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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the critical elements and offers corrective models of effective administrator preparation programs. It argues that such programs should promulgate the learning or "why" of theory, the "what" of research, and the "how" of practice. Only concomitant coursework in the liberal arts, the behavioral sciences, and research welded to clinical practice experiences can best attend to the development of necessary "why" (theoretical), "what" (research), and "how" (practical) administrative skills for future administrators. (JAM)

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THE KEY TRIAD: WHY? WHAT? AND HOW?*

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THE KEY TRIAD: WHAT? HOW? AND WHY?*

> He has considerable gifts himself. He possesses two out of the three qualities necessary for the ideal detective. He has the power of observation and that of deduction. He is only wanting in knowledge, and that may come in time.
>
> Sherlock Holmes: "The Sign of Four."

Unlike Chamfort, the rising young star of French detectives whom Holmes grudgingly praises in "The Sign of Four," many current administrator preparation programs do not even attend well to two of three qualities necessary for an ideal program. (Pitner, 1982; Achilles, 1984 and 1986). The basic framework proposed here for administrator preparation programs is based upon three questions: What? How? and Why? Preparation programs for school administrators are under serious scrutiny (e.g., The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration). They deserve critical review. Some contend that to become academically honest and useful preparation programs need substantive change, not just "tinkering". To guide the new and required changes, however, program developers need frameworks and theories.

Throughout the educational administration literature there has appeared debate regarding administration as an art or a science (e.g., Achilles, 1969, 1981, 1986; Blumberg, 1984, 1987). The art/science dichotomy, while interesting, is insufficient in the face of new data; administrator preparation programs need more than two legs on which to stand. Blumberg (1984, 1987) has spoken eloquently for the need to view administration as neither an art nor a science, but as a craft. High and Achilles (1986) suggested another dimension, that of the administrator as expert; Achilles and Keedy (1983/84) postulated administration as exchange or administration through norm setting, but these characteristics are not of the same order as the art/science/craft conceptualizations.

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*This paper summarizes points from "Unlocking Some Mysteries of Administration and Administrator Preparation: A Reflective Prospect" prepared for the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, 2/86, and synthesizes ideas presented by the author in numerous other places.

Sound educational administration preparation programs are best built on at least the following: (a) theory, (b) research, and (c) the best from practice or craft knowledge (Achilles, 1985). This concept of preparation derives from a clear understanding of how the responsibilities and work of a craftsman or technician differ from those of an academician or of a professional. Since the responsibilities and work of the artisan and the professor differ, it is reasonable to posit differing preparation requirements. Craftsmen and technicians work in the concrete world of objects (How?); academics work in the abstract world of theories/models/ideas (What? Why?). Professionals work with humans to apply (How?) key ideas and theories (What? Why?) from disciplines. (Figure 1). A clear understanding of the types of knowledge appropriate for various occupations is a starting point in building a model to accommodate the professional preparation needs of school administrators.

An administrator must know <u>what</u> to do when a circumstance arises, and <u>how</u> to do what needs to be done in effective and efficient ways. The complete administrator, however, knows not only what and how, but <u>most</u> important, <u>why</u> an action is appropriate. The why dimension builds upon a sound liberal arts base and focuses general knowledge on administration issues. Preparation programs, therefore, must encompass all three dimensions.

These three program dimensions, (Why, What, and How) parallel the three concepts of art, science, and craft. Each in turn derives from one of the three bases of preparation program development: theory, research, and practice. These conceptualizations give rise to the model in Figure 2 which portrays administration as a combination of art, science and craft and notes characteristics of each program component. Figure 2 helps to organize ideas about administration and administrator preparation programs: administration as <u>art</u> deals with conceptualizing and developing theories; as <u>science</u> it deals with analyzing and theory testing; and administration as <u>craft</u> deals with interacting and theory use. The

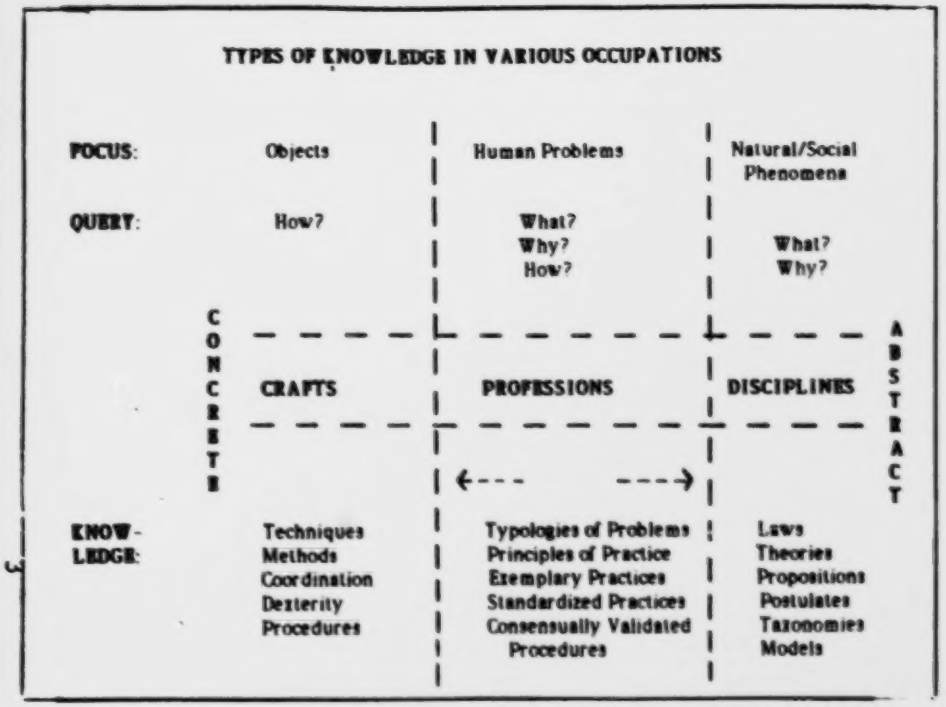

Figure 1. Types of knowledge in various occupations. (From Paula Silver, Draft paper, 1986, Prepared for the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration and used with permission.

	KEY QUESTIONS			
	HOW ?	WHAT ?	WHY ?	TRAINING BASE
Craftsman	Practice	Trail/Error	N/A	Apprenticeship
Technician	Training	Theory Base	N/A	Schooling Apprenticeship
Academician	N/A or Vicarious/ Observation	Research	Study Analysis	Schooling Study
Professional	Practice	Training	Study Reflection	All of Above

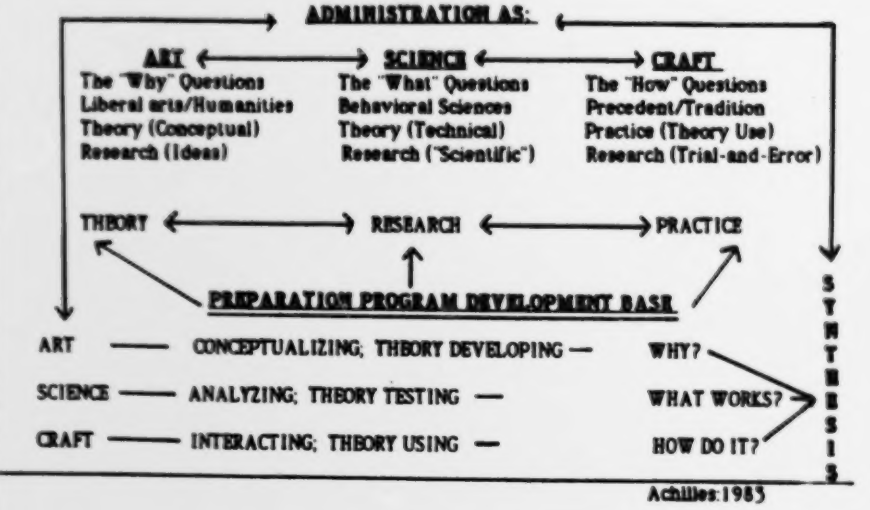

Figure 2. Some key issues in development of administrator preparation programs (From Achilles, 1985), with thanks to P. Silver for adding to these considerations.

simple questions: Why? What? and How? encompass the three strands. A sound preparation program must help administrators synthesize from all three conceptual areas to develop effective administrative skills and styles.

The complex world of administration requires the administrator at once to be a perceptive generalist, a specialist, and an expert practitioner. A preparation program well grounded in theory, research, and practice will address the three disparate administrator roles--generalist, specialist, and expert/practitioner. To accommodate these demands, departments that prepare administrators must share their preparation responsibilities. They will recognize roles in the preparation process for professional associations, state education agencies, local school systems, and others. Preparation program staff will have new and expanded roles to carry forth the demands for extended field work (clinical practice) in preparation programs. Figure 3 depicts some suggested roles, the emphasis of each area and related questions to be addressed.

The next logical step after determining a major theoretic basis for preparation program development is to build the training within an appropriate delivery mode with attention to what is known about how people learn and change. Preparation programs must be true programs with logical sequencing of courses and experiences. They should not be simply aggregates of course hours taken haphazardly, an all too common characteristic of many "programs." Delivery of the training content and experiences should flow from 1) awareness and knowledge, to 2) understanding and skill development, and then to 3) actual transfer or incorporation of the "profession" into the person's total style of operation. Figure 4 provides one summary of such a delivery <u>modus operandi</u>, with an additional column incorporating the idea of personal and professional renewal--keeping current with changing needs and demands. [A conceptual and theoretic framework (e.g. figure 4) must guide preparation program development not just to organize and challenge our thinking, but also to shape our student evaluations

ROLES/FOCUS	EMPHASIS	DIMENSION
Liberal Arts Base	- - - - - - - - - -	Why?
(At least BA; Preferably Master's in a Discipline). Background. Ideas. "Traditional Professor	1. Academics	
Speciality (Theory) Teach Courses. Field Problem Coordinator.	1. Skills 2. Academics	
	- - - - - - - - - -	What?
Research How Schools Work Administrator/ Research Professor School Effects.	1. Academics 2. Skills	
Practice (Craft) Field Professor Cadre of Local Mentors. Practicum Advisor. Intern Advisor.	1. Clinical Practice	
	- - - - - - - - - -	How?

Some of these ideas appear in similar form in the Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration; especially the idea of academic, skill and clinical components for a preparation program.

Figure 3. Potential roles, focus, emphasis and attendant dimension describing an administrator preparation program.

Activity \ Level	I	II	III	IV
Purpose	Understanding. Conceptual Control.	Skill Building. Expanded Knowledge Base.	Transfer of Skill and Knowledge. Synthesis.	Application of Skills and Knowledge. Relationships.
Relation to Change	Awareness/Interest; Initiation. Dissemination.	Trial/Evaluation; Implementation. Demonstration.	Use/Adoption; Incorporation. Diffusion.	Institutionalization and Renewal.
Method(s)	Lecture, Reading. Some Question-and-Answer. (Q and A). Didactic. One-way Communication.	Demonstration. Group Work. Discussion. Critique. Q and A. Two-way Communication. Case studies; Case record.	Practice with Feedback. Simulation; Role Play. Involvement. Q and A. Coaching; Counseling. Develop of "Action Plan."	Practice with Feedback. Synthesis and Application. Counseling. Consulting. Self Motivation. Analysis of Practice.
Communication is Primarily ...	One-way. Leader to class or group.	Two-way, but Leader Directed.	Two-way. Interactive and Equal.	See III.
Mode(s)	Classes. Large group. Individual.	Labs, Seminars. Small group. Individual.	Clinical Experiences. Small group; Mostly One-on-one. Individual.	Independent Practice. Pairs, Teams, Coaching. Individual work.
Possible Assessment Strategies	Paper-pencil Tests. Memory. Rote.	Oral and Written Test Processes. Demonstration of Skill.	Observe & Critique. "Paragraph Analyses." Demo./Discuss.	Discuss/Refine. Informal Processes. Reflection.
Examples of Courses, Experiences, etc.	History/Theory of Ads. Theory of Leadership. Decision/Game Theory. Communication Theory.	Parent Conferencing. Scheduling. Communication Skills. Decision Simulations.	Prepare a Schedule. Problem Solving. Write Policy/Reports. Develop District Plan.	

Figure 4. A suggested model to guide development of preparation programs. Programs should progress in a generally sequential manner from Level I to Level IV. The basic idea for this design is from Achilles and Norman (1974) and is expanded in Achilles (1985, 1986).

of our own creations.] Indeed, the three emphases suggested for administrator preparation programs (Why/What/How) also have an interesting kinship with ideas expressed in the Paideia Proposal (Adler, 1982: 23). These similarities deserve considered attention.

The type of preparation program and delivery system proposed must appropriately support administrator preparation as conceptualized within the professional model, not the liberal arts model. The professional model brings many requirements for changes in current preparation programs:

- More control of entry into the preparation program (and the profession)
- One or two times of entry per year into programs
- En bloc programs (The class of '96)
- Thoughtful sequencing of courses (prerequisites) and experiences. Rather than an array of courses, the candidates encounter a logical, sequential program of study.
- Demonstration of skills with and among peers and mentors
- Clinical (field-based) practice
- Professional administrator preparation at a post-master's level
- Shared responsibility within the profession for preparation.

Administrator preparation within the professional school model will bring attendant changes for staff. Support for these changes must also find its way into the reward structures of employing institutions.

- Increased field service emphases
- New roles for faculty
- Applied research and assessment of use of research will have equal value with "pure" research
- Reports and projects will compete with "refereed" research articles for legitimacy and reward
- Problem finding and problem solving will be equally valued.

In Summary

Administrator preparation programs must be developed within a framework which includes and blends three essential components of preparation for a profession: art/theory (Why); science/research (What); and craft/practice (How). Implications of this argument suggest that preparation programs include strong components in general or liberal education, behavioral sciences, research (academics), attention to and development of administrative skills, and guided practice (clinical experiences) in actual job settings. These, it seems, are the elements of the education of the professional. Any less rigorous a preparation process relegates the administrator to the role of craftsman or technician. The administrator must be equipped to deal effectively with the What, How, and Why questions that are the challenges of education. And like Holmes' ideal detective, the complete administrator should have all three of the necessary attributes of the professional.

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